Teaching Induction 2014
Michael Rovatsos – Informatics Director of Teaching
Some People to Know

Organising

- ITO: Informatics Teaching Organisation
- Course Secretary (one for each year)
- Year Organiser
- Director of Teaching, Deputy Director of Teaching

Teaching

- Lecturers
- Teaching Assistant
- Tutors
- Demonstrators
SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS STUDENT SERVICES

CONTACT FORM

This form is designed to help the IGS and ITO respond quickly and effectively to all UG and PG student or course/programme related enquiries. Please use these fields to provide a detailed description of your enquiry, particularly selecting from the correct IGS or ITO drop down list!

Students are asked to use this form to communicate all course/programme queries, extension requests and information that you would like to be considered by your Supervisor or Director of Studies.

Staff in the IGS and/or ITO will either respond directly, or pass your enquiry to someone who can assist. You can track your requests using your DICE login.

For all computing enquiries please use the Computing Support form at: http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/systems/support/form.

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<tr>
<th>Your Username:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Name:</td>
<td>Ian Stark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative e-mail address:</td>
<td>Please provide an alternative email address if you do not want to use your default Informatics address.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enquiry:</td>
<td>IGS (Postgraduate Research admissions and programme related enquiries)</td>
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<td>ITO (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught admissions and course/programme related enquiries)</td>
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Informatics Teaching Organisation

The Informatics Teaching Organisation (ITO) is part of Informatics Student Services, responsible for the operation of all the School's undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes. Use these pages to find additional information about the School's teaching environment and procedures.

Direct access:

- ITO Staff and Contact Details
- Sortable List of Courses in Informatics
- Year Guides
- Informatics Introductory Meeting for new undergraduate and visiting students
- Course Registration Form for Undergraduate Students

Collected information:

- More Information about Taught Courses
- Other Information for Students
- Other Information for Staff [requires login]

For information about recruitment and admissions please see the School's public website:

- Undergraduate Recruitment
- Postgraduate Recruitment

http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching
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Contact Information

Availability & Contact Details
Based on level 4 of Appleton Tower, the main office (room 4.02) is open during the core hours of Monday-Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm, although closes from 12.30-1.30pm for lunch. Please direct all enquiries as follows:

Informatics Teaching Organisation
University of Edinburgh
Appleton Tower [room 4.02]
Crichton Street
EDINBURGH
EH8 9LE

- **Internal Enquiries** [if you have an Informatics DICE account]
- **External Enquiries** [if you don't have a DICE account]
- Phone +44 131 650 2706 [50-2706 from within the University]
- Fax +44 131 650 2957 [50-2957 from within the University]

People
The Teaching Organisation is part of the School's Student Services team. Staff who have a direct Teaching Organisation responsibility include:

- **Ian Stark** [Director of Teaching]
- **Michael Rovatsos** [Deputy Director of Teaching]
- Gillian Bell
Basics

A standard Scottish Honours Degree lasts four years.

Informatics offers these in:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Cognitive Science
- Computer Science
- Software Engineering

As well as combined degrees with

- Mathematics : Electronics : Physics : Management

There is also a five-year integrated Masters in Informatics.
Basics

Informatics also offers one-year Masters programmes in:

- Artificial Intelligence
- Cognitive Science
- Computer Science
- Informatics

All of these undergraduate and postgraduate degrees share much common structure and many courses.

Students have a wide choice of courses both inside and outside Informatics: in the first year many do enough to switch to an entirely different degree.
Basics

The School of Informatics is quite big.

In a large year we have 500 undergraduates, 200 MSc students and 250 PhD students, with 90 taught courses across 20 undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

Not every year is a large year, but many parts of the system regularly work at or beyond capacity. Things can get busy.
Duties

Standard duties of full-time teaching staff:

- Teaching 20 credits worth of courses per year (15 where sharing is possible. One should be year 1/2.
- Tutoring two tutorial groups per year. One of these should be on a year 1/2 undergraduate course.
- Supervising three undergraduate and three Master’s projects.
- Acting as a Personal Tutor for around 20-30 students.
- Taking on one major or two minor admin duties for the School.
Duties

This sounds like a lot. Actually it’s three hours of teaching over 20 weeks a year, plus project supervision and PTing.

We teach around 1200 credits of courses and have around 100 staff. Actually, in 2014/15 only 38 members of staff have full teaching duties.

Chancellor’s Fellows: ramping up to full load over three years, normally 0/5-10-15 pattern.

Head of School approves other special arrangements, if position largely bought out, or major administrative duty.
Degree Structure

Each student is on particular Degree Programme.

They are studying for year 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or MSc.

Each year is divided into two semesters:

- Semester 1 runs from September to December.
- Semester 2 runs January to May with a break in April.
Semester Structure

10 + 1 weeks

Standard courses are taught over 11 weeks

Usually, lectures and assignments should fit into the first 10 weeks, with the final week available for return of work, feedback and possibly a review or exam preparation lecture.

Most courses feature 20 lecture slots, but with around 15 lectures-worth of examinable content together with guest lectures, review, extension material, etc.
Course Content

Most courses contain some mixture of:

- Lectures
- Tutorials
  - All first and second-year courses
  - Several third-year courses
  - A few fourth-year and MSc courses
- Labs

The exact combination depends on the course content type.
Personal Tutors

Each student has a “Personal Tutor”. This has recently replaced the previous role of “Director of Studies”.

Each Personal Tutor has 20-30 students across all years.

Students meet their Tutor each semester, and also call on them if problems arise either in their study or outside.

If you find a student is doing particularly badly, or discover some external circumstances are affecting their ability to study, please pass this on to their Personal Tutor.
Some Features of Teaching at Edinburgh

There are characteristics of teaching at Edinburgh which, while common in UK universities, differ from those in some other countries.

- Structure of degree programmes
- Approaches to assessment
- Boundaries of responsibility
Programme of Study

Degrees at Edinburgh each form an integrated programme.

- Students progress through complete years.
- Each year has a distinct structure.
- Only limited resits or repetition of courses are allowed.
- Achieving a set of courses together in a year is key.
- The final grade and degree class reports overall performance for the last two ("Honours") years.

This is distinctively different from modular degrees where students collect credits over time and final results are computed as Grade Point Averages.
Student Assessment

Course grading is:

- Criterion-based
  - Not norm-referenced, no grade curve
  - Marks added, not removed, and scaling is rare

- Summative
  - Assessment of what student knows or can do
  - May be quite distinct from teaching and learning

- Specified in advance
  - Date and nature of assessed coursework
  - Basis for marking and grades

Credit is not based on time spent, effort, or attendance.
Teaching and Learning

Most teaching activities are about supporting student learning, not assessing their performance.

- Lectures are not compulsory, nor is attendance taken.
- Tutorials in early years do have attendance records, and absence is followed up, but this does not directly affect grades.
- Formative assessment for learning can involve homework exercises or coursework assignments with marks and feedback, but primarily to inform the student.

In practice, unfortunately, some students do concentrate on credit-bearing activities to the exclusion of all others.
Collective responsibility for courses

All teaching staff are collectively responsible for degree programmes and the courses within them.

- Individual lecturers can only make limited changes to course content, method of assessment.
- Larger changes are discussed and ratified in committee.
- Exams have fixed formats and are mutually scrutinised and jointly approved long before they happen.
- Lecturers attend exam boards together to review student grades for the year.
Shared responsibility for performance

Responsibility for final performance is not solely held by the student, but shared in part with teaching staff.

- It’s not simply “sink or swim”.
- We review any course where >20% of students fail.
- We don’t set aggressive tests to weed out the weak.
- We go to quite a lot of effort to assist students who are failing to learn and to progress through the degree.

Unlike the previous features, this is much less clear-cut, and Edinburgh just has one position on a wide spectrum.
Lecturer Duties and Delegation

A course lecturer is responsible for:

- Lecture preparation and delivery
- Coursework preparation, marking, and student feedback
- Planning and delivery of any tutorials or labs
- Exam preparation and marking

For a small course (<30 students) a lecturer may do all this personally. For larger courses some tasks may be delegated to teaching assistants, tutors, demonstrators, and markers. The lecturer should always:

- Deliver the lectures, except for guest lectures
- Set the exams and mark them, possibly with assistance
Further Responsibilities

Lecturers are broadly expected to be in Edinburgh throughout teaching time.

- Inform ITO of short absences, and make arrangements to cover teaching (move lectures, ask colleague, etc.)
- Absences above a week require special permission.

Examinations bring various duties:

- Attending exam scrutiny meetings and exam boards.
- Being available by telephone during the exam itself.

Students with special requirements have a “schedule of adjustments”. The ITO send these to the relevant lecturers.
Student Workload

Students take 120 credit points each year, 60 per semester.

- Most courses are 10 credit points, some are 20 or 40.
- A typical taught course has 1/6 of a student’s time.
- In a full week this amounts to around 6 hours of work.

Some courses are lighter, or intensively use the final weeks beyond teaching; but time this notionally releases is needed as headroom for context switching and load balancing.

This is not much time: think about how many hours you are asking on coursework assignments, and be amazed at how many weeks that requires once you allow for lectures, tutorials and anything else you ask the students to do.
The Myth of Credit Hours

Our credit points are nationally-regulated SCOTCAT points, with a fixed exchange rate to the European ECTS system.

Some regulations describe 10 points as 100 hours of study.

This is calibrated as a gross measure of the year length: how many weeks students spend in Edinburgh.

It does not scale down to individual courses: students will not have 100 hours to dedicate to a 10 point course, even including revision and exam time.

Work instead with the fraction of their time you can expect, and you will get a much more realistic estimate.
Coursework, Assessment and Feedback

There are School standards for coursework.

- Students should receive marks and feedback within two weeks of submission.
- Arrangements may differ for substantial coursework or large courses; but this must be fixed in advance.
- Late submissions are not accepted, and only the year organiser can grant extensions.
- Deadlines should be 4pm, usually on a Thursday.
- All marks are out of 100, and the University has a standard grade scale.

All this and more is detailed on the relevant web page.
Plagiarism and Dishonesty

You may on occasion suspect student misconduct: plagiarism, collusion, falsification, cheating, deceit, or impersonation.

In every case you should take no action yourself, but instead report your concern to the School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO), currently Kyriakos Kalorkoti. He will advise and take appropriate action.

Read the University pages on misconduct and plagiarism.
Examination Process

Setting and marking exams follows a fixed procedure.

- Lecturers write their exam to a standard format.
- They meet and scrutinise all exams for their year.
- Based on this they make corrections and adjustments.
- **The students sit the exams.**
- Lecturers mark the exam scripts.
- They meet as a Board of Examiners to review grades for individual courses, and for the year as a whole.
- For years 1, 2 and 3 it all repeats for resit examinations.

The ITO orchestrate the whole process. They mail you, but you will need to check timetables and calendars online.
Jargon

Committees

- Teaching Committee
  Day-to-day teaching practice and policy
- Board of Studies
  Course content and programme structure

You are here

- School of Informatics
- College of Science and Engineering
- University of Edinburgh

Other schools may do things differently; other colleges more so.
Jargon

International Study

- Bologna (European higher education harmonisation)
- Erasmus (European student exchange scheme)
- VUG (visiting undergraduate)

Courses and Programmes

- UGT, PGT, PGR {under, post}graduate {taught, research}
- DPT (Degree Programme Table)
- SQA levels 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 (Scottish Qualifications Authority)
Polopoly
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Tutorial Groups

- Algorithms and Data Structures
- Computational Cognitive Science
- Computability and Intractability
- Computer Programming Skills and Concepts
- Discrete Mathematics and Mathematical Reasoning
- Informatics 1 - Cognitive Science
- Informatics 1 - Computation and Logic
- Informatics 1 - Functional Programming
- Informatics 2A - Processing Formal and Natural Languages
- Informatics 2C - Introduction to Computer Systems
- Information Engineering with Objects and Components
- Information Theory
- Logic Programming
- Modelling and Reasoning
- Programming with Objects and Components

Theon Portal

Theon

http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk/teaching/Stark/Rovatsos 2012-14

UG/PGT
Degree Programme Table: Computer Science (BSc Hons) (UTCMPSI)

Year 1, Academic year 2012/13, Starting month: September

Notes: Before selecting your outside courses, please ensure you have met your Director of Studies.

COMPULSORY COURSES
This DPT has compulsory course(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Informatics 1 - Computation and Logic Programming</td>
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<tr>
<td>INFRO8012</td>
<td>Informatics 1 - Functional Programming</td>
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<tr>
<td>INFRO8018</td>
<td>Informatics 1 - Object-Oriented Programming</td>
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INFORMATICS 1: DATA & ANALYSIS 2011–2012

This is a level 8 taught course in the School of Informatics, suitable for first-year undergraduate students. The course provides an introduction to representing and interpreting data from areas across Informatics; treating in particular structured, semi-structured, and unstructured data models. For further details see the course catalogue entry.

Lectures: 11.10-12.00 Tuesdays and 14.00-14.50 Fridays in Appleton Tower during Semester 2. Tuesday lectures are in Lecture Theatre 3 and Friday lectures are in Lecture Theatre 1. You are strongly advised to attend all lectures.

Informatics 1: Data & Analysis is part of the first-year programme for all undergraduate degrees in the School of Informatics. During semester 2, students should also be taking Informatics 1: Object Oriented Programming. Please see the following links for more information.

- Informatics 1 Overview
- Informatics 1 Diary
- Informatics Teaching Timetable

Links: Appleton Tower; Lecture Theatre 3; Lecture Theatre 1; CVS
## Course Index – Sortable List

Students are encouraged to reconfigure the information presented on this page to gather courses into particular groups [e.g. collections, semesters, levels, points etc]. The default order of the list is alphabetical, ordered by course title, just click on column headings to change sort order.

This page should also be used to find out the Informatics course acronym for each course, used elsewhere in the timetable, examination, etc. The column labelled course title provides a link to the Informatics course page, the EUCLID code title links to the centrally hosted course information page.

Additional information is available in the [Course Registration part of the ITO website](http://www.inf.ed.ac.uk), including introduction and course aims.

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<tr>
<th>Course URL</th>
<th>EUCLID Code</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>AI</th>
<th>CG</th>
<th>CS</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>Lecturer(s)/Coordinator(s)</th>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>4</td>
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For More Information

Ask:
- ITO; Year Organiser; Me or Alex

Read:
- ITO web pages
- Course year guides
- Follow “for students” not just “for staff”

Train
- Institute for Academic Development (IAD) run courses for lecturers, tutors, researchers, and students.